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BATTLEGROUND LEBANON
by SAMUEL M. KATZ
artist plates by RON VOLSTAD
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CONCORD
PUBLICATIONS COMPANY

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Front cover

The business end of an M109A1 155mm self-propelled artillery piece, at a forward fire-base in southern Lebanon. Although the guerrilla war against the Shi'ites and Palestinian terrorists was a foot soldier's campaign, some heavy back-up was always welcome!
(*BAMACHANE*/Michal Rotam)

Back cover (Upper right)

Understandably nervous, a squad of paratroopers advance behind the safety (though target rich) of the M113 during the breakthrough at Sidon; scene of some of the most bitter fighting of the 1982 Lebanon War.
(*BAMACHANE*/Michael Zarfati)

(Left)

Standing besides their M113 APC loaded with spare parts and the squad's personal equipment, *GOLANI* infantrymen armed with *GALIL* ARMs, and M-16s (note sniper scope) pause during the IDF's phased pull-out from Lebanon, 1985.
(*BAMACHANE*/Michael Zarfati)

(Lower right)

An armored column of Centurion and M-60 MBTs makes its way through the rubble of the ex-PLO stronghold of Sidon, during the first week of the war, June 1982.
(*BAMACHANE*)

INTRODUCTION — BATTLEGROUND LEBANON

There was a time not long ago when Lebanon was considered one of the most beautiful and peaceful lands on the face of this earth. With snow-capped mountains in the northeast, a breathtaking Mediterranean shore-line in the west, and a national Byzantine-type personality for trade. Lebanon became a world center for finance and fun in a much troubled part of the world. Lebanon even earned the reputation as the "Riviera of the Middle East". Time, and the strife of the Arab-Israeli conflict would catch up the Levant with a vengeance.

Lebanon had always been an anomaly. With the country split between a ruling Christian minority, a Muslim majority, and the fiercely independent Druze Muslims determined to remained fiercely independent, Lebanon was historically a conglomerate of factions who employed private armies for power and security. That delicate balance which survived both Ottoman and French occupations was destroyed in 1948, with the influx of hundreds of thousands of Palestinians refugees, who flooded the Levant after the establishment of the state of Israel, and its subsequent war of independence. The real imbalance of power in Lebanon came in the late 1970s, when a new influx of Palestinian refugees, mainly armed elements of the various guerrilla factions, were violently thrown out of Jordan in the bloody civil war of September 1970. It eventually became known as "Black September", and brought the Palestinian terrorist movement in full force to Lebanon, where they duly set up camp. They transformed Lebanon from a "tropical resort" into a stepping stone for terrorist attacks against Israel's northern frontier, always inviting the very harsh Israeli retaliatory strike in response to every terror outrage.

In the sunny April warmth of 1975 Lebanon went mad. The hatred, suspicions and factual loyalties which had determined Lebanon's peaceful path for centuries evaporated into a destructive haze. Well armed Palestinians groups attacked well armed Christian militias only have the Christians attack them in return. The leftists, fascists, Druze, Shi'ites, and other factions soon joined the fray with shocking brutality: even by Middle Eastern standards. Massacre followed massacre, and Beirut, once the Paris of the Near East was reduced to a Mediterranean version of Stalingrad.

Exacerbating the madness were the Syrians and the Israelis; who had their own genuine strategic concerns in what happened in the nation next door. Syria felt an obvious need to intervene in the civil war, as it had historically considered Lebanon as part of "Greater Syria", and was determined not to allow one single group to dominate the country's political and military character. At first, when it appeared that the Christians were to emerge as the dominant military power, the Syrian's despatched its proxy Palestinian forces (mainly elements of the Syrian battalions of the PLA-Palestine Liberation Army, and *As-Salqa,* a Syrian controlled Palestinian terror faction) across the Beirut-Damasus Highway to assist in the routing of the Christians. When in 1976 the Palestinians seemed on the verge of victory, Syrian President Assad despatched a 40,000 man invasion force to crush the Palestinians and leftist Muslims with "extreme prejudice". The Israelis were also quite active in Lebanon, cultivating strong ties with the various Christian militias (especially the dominant militia of the Gemayel family: the Lebanese Forces or Phalangists), hoping to one day achieve a Christian-Jewish alliance amid a sea of Muslim enemies. In any event, the 1975-76 Civil War resulted in over 50,000 Lebanese dead, and pushed the volatile Middle East ever so closer to the brink.

The Israeli relationship with the Christians did not succeed in securing Israel from Palestinian terrorist attacks. In March 1978, seaborne Palestinian terrorists attacked Israel's coastal highway, and in the ensuing melee, 38 innocent people were massacred. The Israel Defense Forces (IDF) responded with an ineffectual mini-invasion of southern Lebanon (known as 'Operation Litani'), which would prove to be a harbinger of larger things to come. The IDF helped Muslim militia in southern Lebanon whose primary objective was to stop Palestinian attacks across the border into Israel. The Palestinians meanwhile formed their own mini-state of Palestine in southern Lebanon, much to the anguish of the local Shi'ite and Christian population. The Palestinians, secure in the series of bases, confronted Israel with unrelenting Katyusha rocket attacks against her northern settlements, as well as bloody infiltration attempts. To compound the military threat to Israel's northern frontier, Syria still had a 30,000 man peacekeeping army in Lebanon, complete with over a dozen batteries of sophisticated surface to air batteries. To Israel, the situation in Lebanon was intolerable. Under the command of Defense Minister 'Arik' Sharon and IDF Chief of Staff Lt. General 'Raful' Eitan, both highly decorated ex-paratroop officers, a military solution to "the Lebanon situation" was sought. All that was needed was the spark.

On 3 June 1982, gunmen from the Abu-Nidal terror faction, a radical Palestinian terrorist group, made an attempt of the life of Israel's ambassador to the United Kingdom on the streets of London. Israel responded with intense aerial attacks against Palestinian terror targets in Beirut, which in typical Middle Eastern fashion, were in turn met with heavy Palestinian Katyusha barrages against Galilee. On 6 June 1982, a 60,000 man Israeli invasion force (according to the foreign press) crossed the Lebanese frontier to bring "Peace to Galilee".

"Operation Peace For Galilee" began as

another lightning Israeli military romp. Armor, paratroop, and infantry units succeeded in destroying and capturing major Palestinian strongholds, including the Crusader Beaufort castle, and the refugee camps in and around the port cities of Tyre and Sidon. The IDF engaged Syrian forces in eastern Lebanon with a massive aerial operation against the Syrian SAMs, and in the ensuing dog-fights, the Syrians lost 90 MiGs and Sukhois to no Israeli losses. On the ground, the battles weren't as one sided as in the air, but an IDF victory none the less. Vicious tank battles were waged in combat which pitted the brand new IDF main battle tank, the *MERKAVA* or "Chariot", and against the newest Soviet tank in the Syrian arsenal, the T-72. The fighting in the Beka'a Valley also introduced attack helicopters into tank warfare's bloody fray.

Israel however wanted to once and for all remove the Palestinian terrorist infra-structure from her northern frontier, and decided to push onwards towards Beirut. The politically controversial decision to seize an Arab capital was fueled by blank and deceptive Christian promises that "they would remove the Palestinians from Beirut", and the result was a bitter war of attrition, sieges, and urban combat waged only by the beleaguered IDF. After two months of bombardments, aerial assaults, and piecemeal advances, the Palestinians surrendered, and agreed to leave the Lebanese capital. As over 14,000 Palestinian terrorists left Beirut by sea and land under the auspices of a multi-national peace-keeping force of French paratroopers and U.S. and Italian Marines. Bashir Gemayel, warlord of the Lebanese Forces was elected Lebanon's new president in September 1982, but his subsequent assassination at the hands of the pro-Syrian SSNP (Syrian Socialist National Party) resulted in further chaos very familiar to Lebanon. The Lebanese Forces blamed the Palestinians for the murder of their leader, and perpetrated the now infamous Sabra and Shatilla Massacres. The IDF moved into West Beirut (the Muslim half), and the MNF returned to war-torn Beirut.

What was to follow in the following six years was a disintegration of every and any semblance Lebanon was to have as a sovereign nation. The Syrians and Israelis withdrew to more defensible positions, while the mission of the MNF units stationed in West Beirut became that of guardian of the ruling Christian government. The Druze, angered by their historic enemy the Christians assuming power declared a bitter civil war in the Shouf mountain surrounding the Lebanese capital. The Americans supported the fledgling giant the world fears to this date: Lebanon's Shi'ite fundamentalists. Inspired by the Islamic fundamentalism of the Ayotullah Khomeini in Iran, the Shi'ite radicals using the names of *Jihad al-Islami* (Islamic Holy war) and *Hizballah* (Party of God) declared a *Jihad* or Holy War against the enemies of Islam. At first the Americans were targeted. The U.S. Embassy in West Beirut was destroyed by a Shi'ite suicide truck bomber in the spring of 1983, only to be followed by the 23 October suicide truck boming of the U.S. Marine headquarters at Beirut International Airport, and a simultaneous attack against the French HQ which resulted in hundreds of dead. Throughout the madness, Syria sat in the wings, pulling the strings of proxy forces which allowed her to control a nation it felt it had a mandate to dominate. Within time, the MNF was forced to withdraw!

The Israelis also became the target of the Shi'ite rage. On 4 November 1983, the IDF HQ in Tyre was destroyed by a Shi'ite suicide bomber, in which 23 Israeli soldiers, mainly Border Guard policemen, were killed. Public opinion in Israel called for a withdrawal from the Lebanon madness, but Israel clearly found itself in a "Catch-22" situation. Although the Palestinian terror factions were in disarray following the Beirut departure and a 1983 vicious PLO civil war in northern Lebanon, Palestinian terrorist units were infiltrating back towards Israel following every phased IDF withdrawal. If the IDF was to withdraw completely and the Palestinians were to return; 'Operation Peace For Galilee' would have been a waste, and the hundreds of Israeli killed in vain. Yet the escalating, fanatic, and fierce guerrilla war the Shi'ites waged against the IDF (oddly enough, the Shi'ites initially welcomed the IDF invasion as "their" liberation from PLO clutches) took an unbearable toll on IDF casualties. The IDF responded with a harsh "Iron Fist" strategy, but decided to withdraw in any event.

Today, Lebanon remains a merciless land of slaughter. The Syrians sit in Lebanon stronger than ever, Shi'ites battles Christians and Palestinian in vicious close-quarter fighting whose causes date back to the Crusades! The Palestinian terror groups have returned somewhat to their glory in southern Lebanon, trying to once again destroy Lebanon on its way to destroying Israel. The IDF meanwhile sits in a 12 kilometer wide security belt along it northern frontier. It supports a small Major Haddad artifact known as the SLA (South Lebanese Army) and maintains a constant vigil against Palestinian terrorist attacks against her northern settlements.

This book is a study of the forces which have fought in Lebanon in the past decade. For obvious reasons of logistics and available material, most of the emphasis will be with the Israel Defense Forces. Nevertheless, through examining the Palestinians, Christians, Druze, Shi'ites, and others, a greater understanding can be achieved as to how and why the once peaceful Levant became "Battleground Lebanon"!

11:00 hours, 6 June 1982: the Israel Defense Forces invade Lebanon. Along the coastal highway, a *MERKAVA* MK. I MBT leads column of armor and infantry towards Tyre, and much bitter fighting.
(IDF Spokesman)

Beaufort Castle, 717 feet above sea level, and with a dominating view of northern Israel, the PLO had long utilized the ancient crusader fortress as an artillery observation point. The IDF captured it in the first hours of the war with a bold though costly attack by elements of *SAYERET GOLANI,* the *GOLANI* Brigade's elite reconnaissance force. (IDF Spokesman)



After the brutal fighting around the Palestinian refugee camp of El Ba'as near Tyre, a TOW ATGW jeep belonging to a paratroop reconnaissance force mounts a patrol through some very war torn territory. Note the jeep crew's method for storing the personal gear on the vehicle, and reservist in background trying to comprehend the destruction around him.
(IDF Spokesman)



During a heated fire-fight at the Rachidiyeh refugee camp near Tyre, an Israeli paratrooper prepares to fire an anti-tank rifle grenade at a PLO fortification. The ferocity of the fighting is clearly evident by the fact that the paratrooper carries as many grenades as he can possibly handle, including placing them in an unused canteen pouch. (IDF)



Responding to a suspicious object aside a once secured road, paratroopers race from their upgraded M113 APC towards contact with the enemy. Of interesting note is the paratrooper armed with a *GLILON* 5.56mm SAR fitted with a rifle grenade. (*BAMACHANE*/ Uzi Keren)

An IDF M113 passes carefully through the Lebanese cedars during the drive into Lebanon.
(*BAMACHANE* / Michael Zarfati)



Along the road to Sidon, Israeli tankers seize, and search "suspicious" characters, after an RPG was fired in their direction. Although the IDF invasion was a massive display of firepower, strict orders were issued by the General Staff to prevent unnecessary civilian casualties. It was an order typical of the IDF's traditional policy of *TQHAR HANESHEK* or "purity of arms", which dictated the morale use of deadly force.
(IDF Spokesman)



View of a very menacing arms cache discovered by Israeli forces in the very "peaceful" confines of a United Nations school for Palestinian refugees in the Rachidiyeh camp.
(IDF Spokesman)

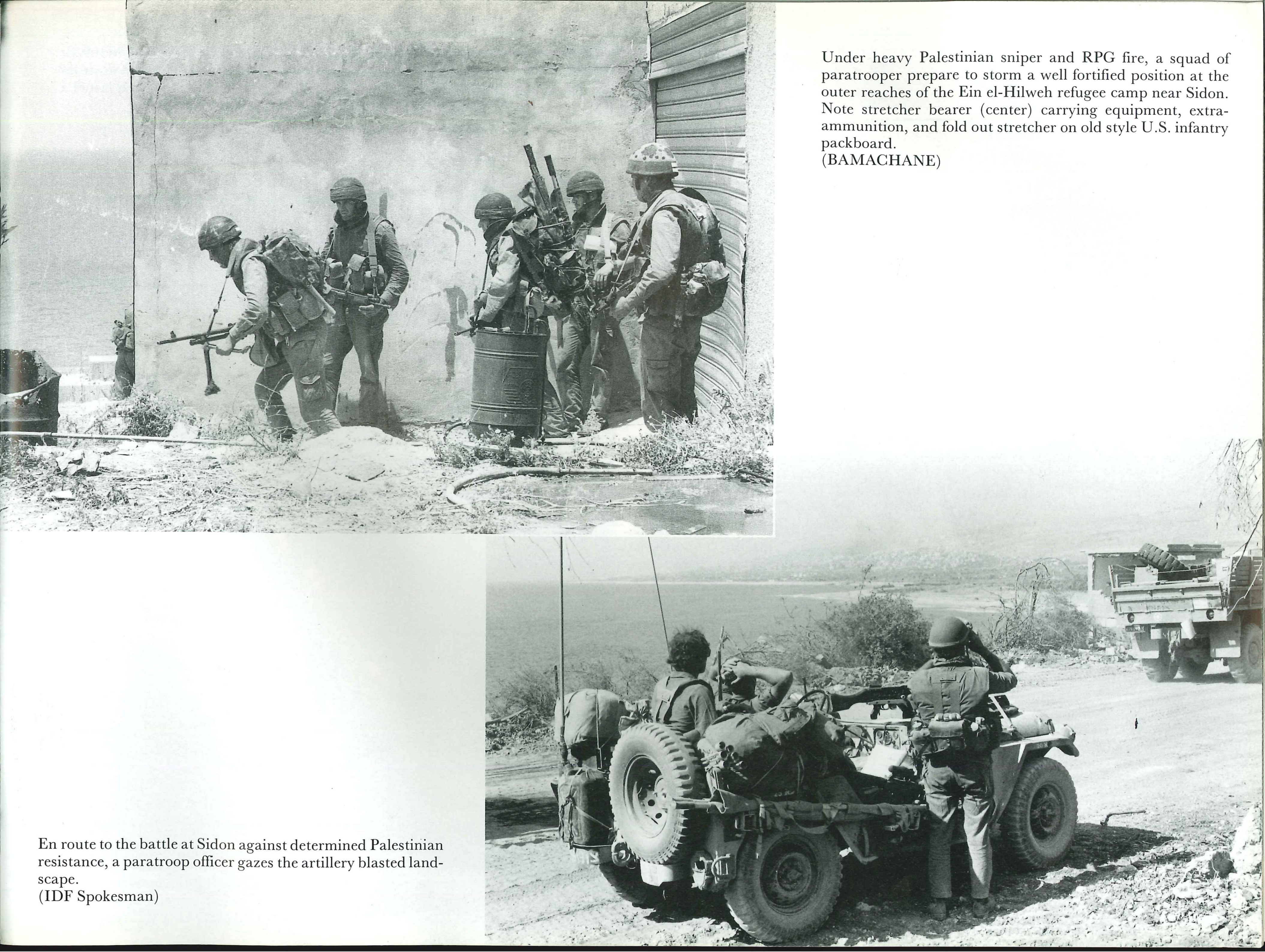


Keeping Lebanon out of Israel! A National Police Border Guard *(MISHMAR HAG-VUL)* joint-security vehicle mans a vigil alongside the fence separating northern Israel from Lebanon. With attacks by Palestinian infiltratórs and Shi'ite suicide attackers a possibility at any moment, the Israeli-Lebanese frontier is one of the most heavily defended anywhere in this world. (Samuel M. Katz)



An upgraded Centurion (known in IDF slang as *SHO'T*) fitted with a bulldozer blade departs the hull of an IDF/Navy landing craft en route to the battle for Sidon.
(IDF Spokesman)

Another view of the same craft, unloading a column of M113s.
(IDF Spokesman)



Under heavy Palestinian sniper and RPG fire, a squad of paratrooper prepare to storm a well fortified position at the outer reaches of the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp near Sidon. Note stretcher bearer (center) carrying equipment, extra-ammunition, and fold out stretcher on old style U.S. infantry packboard.
(BAMACHANE)

En route to the battle at Sidon against determined Palestinian resistance, a paratroop officer gazes the artillery blasted landscape.
(IDF Spokesman)

Supported by an obsolete yet ever present M3 halftrack, a battery of M109AL 155mm self-propelled artillery pieces prepares to blast away at Palestinian strongholds in the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp. The battle for Ein el-Hilweh lasted a week, and would be considered one of hardest fought of the entire war.
(IDF Spokesman)

Excellent view of an Israeli paratrooper grenadier and his personal gear, during the battle for Aley in June 1982. He carries a *GALIL* 5.56mm assault rifle, specially adapted for firing anti-tank rifle grenades with forward grenade sight, and special 12 round magazines.
(BAMACHANE)



Near Bhamdoun, Combat Engineer sappers prepare to destroy some unexploded ordnance before continuing to ''purify'' the town's main thoroughfare. (BAMACHANE)



A paratroop patrol in the Beka'a Valley, in search of Syrian Commandos. Of interesting note is the grenadier (second in line), equipped with a *GLILON* SAR (the short barrelled version of the GALIL) fitted with an M/203 40mm grenade launcher. Also note sniper in background, armed with an M-21 shiper's rifle; the accurized version of the M-14 7.62mm weapon (BAMACHANE)



Deploying against Syrian armor near Sultan Yackoub, a *MERKAVA* Mk. I MBT leads its supporting element of mechanized infantrymen into battle. (IDF Spokesman)





The June 1982 battles between Israeli and Syrian armor introduced attack helicopters into the vocabulary of tank warfare with destructive results. The Syrians achieved effective results with their airborne Gazelle and Mi-24 tank killers, and the Israelis responded in kind with the Hughes Defender-500, and the extremely agile and deadly Bell-209, pictured here responding to a column of Syrian T-62s. (IDF Spokesman)

M163 Israel Air Force (IAF) Vulcan gatling guns deploy alongside Israeli armor and infantry units in the Beka'a Valley awaiting the inevitable showdown with Syrian forces near Rachalya. Although originally despatched to Lebanon as an anti-aircraft measure, the Vulcans as they became affectionately known, proved invaluable in rooting out enemy fortifications. (IDF Spokesman)





En route to the close-quarter tank battles at Ein-Zehalta, a convoy of exposed vehicles bivouac for the afternoon on a mountain road for some badly needed maintenance. Note M48 AVLB in background. (IDF Spokesman)

Further down the road with the same convoy. Note Medical Corps aid station identified by large white circle with red Star of David *MAGEN DAVID* in center. Also note Centurion MBT in background fitted with a bulldozer blade. (IDF Spokesman)



Along a "pit stop" in the Beka'a Valley, an excellent view is afforded of an Israeli upgraded Patton MBT fitted with boxes of Blazer reactive armor. (IDF Spokesman)



During a lull in the fighting in the Beka'a Valley, a group of tankers from a *HESDER* (Yeshiva seminary) unit pause for some useful prayer. Note M113 *ZELDA* APC (left) fitted with the accompanying compliment of infantrymen's packboards. (IDF Spokesman)



Close-up view of the boxes of Blazer armor attached to the Israeli upgraded Patton. The commander's cupola mounted .30 caliber machine gun is rare, considering most vehicles are now fitted with either the FN MAG 7.62mm light machine gun, or the heavier, M2 Browning .50 caliber. (IDF Spokesman)



With the tell-tale smoke of battle in the background, mechanized and armor elements of an IDF task force head deeper into the Beka'a Valley. Of interesting note is the crew rear storage bin, and the cupola mounted .30 caliber machine gun, fitted here with a bi-pod for use outside the vehicle. (IDF Spokesman)



Excellent view of an upgraded Patton, conducting a cautious patrol through inhospitable terrain opposite Syrian forces in the Beka'a Valley. Photograph offers an excellent view of the Blazer armor set-up, as well as the .50 caliber machine gun mounted at the turret gun base. Note 52mm mortar attached to the turret, within an arms reach of the vehicle commander. (IDF Spokesman)



Ready...aim...fire! With a Syrian T-62 well within the 105mm gun's sights, a Patton crew fires for a definite hit. Note vehicle marking sheet.
(IDF Spokesman)



A succession of photographs indicating target acquisition and contact. On a mountain road in the Beka'a Valley, an upgraded Patton' commander spots an enemy concentration of forces, and moments later, fires from behind the cover of the tree lined road.
(IDF Spokesman)

At an exposed firing position overlooking a strategic portion of the Beirut-

fire onto Syrian force below. Noted dozens of spent shells littering the road (left) indicating a long day's work.
(IDF Spokesman)





Not a good place for a vehicle malfunction. Amid hills which could very well provide shelter for roving teams of Syrian anti-tank commandos, an upgraded Patton receives some "hasty" maintenance by very tense soldiers. (IDF Spokesman)



With Syrian artillery and mortar fire exploding all around, a *MERKAVA* Mk. I crew negotiates the rocky Lebanese terrain while rushing into battle. As always, the commander stands upright in his turret. (IDF Spokesman)



An artillery officer finds a solitude moment of peace, before his M109AL will receive the order to fire, and use all the 155mm shells patiently sitting besides the monstrous self-propelled artillery vehicle. (IDF)



As the Aeromedical Evacuation Unit helicopter prepares to life-off, reservist soldiers rush a wounded comrade to safety during fighting in the Shouf Mountains. Most Israeli field casualties were in Israeli hospitals receiving treatment within 30 minutes of suffering their wounds. (IGPO)



Atop the wreckage at the village of Deir Qanoun, Israeli paratroopers carrying *GALIL* assault rifles search for friendly units in the area. Photograph offers an excellent rear view of the IDF load bearing equipment.
(IGPO)



With the orange aerial identification sheet covering several portions of their heavily laden vehicle, reservist paratroopers pause at a small *Kfar* or village en route towards Beirut, July 1982. The officer at the wheel carries a CAR-15 5.56mm assault rifle, and wears an M-1952 flak vest.
(IDF Spokesman)



Nervous *GOLANI* infantrymen stand upright in the M113 *ZELDA* as they approach a small village "too quiet for one's liking" near the Lebanese capital. Such mechanized patrols were ripe targets for the RPG children, young Palestinians trained to snipe at enemy armor with devastating effectiveness, especially since many Israeli soldiers were hesitant to fire upon "kids". (IDF Spokesman)



Amid the palm trees and Mediterranean beauty of what once was Lebanon, a battery of M109ALs softens up targets in Beirut.
(IDF)

The side skirt armor of a *MERKAVA* Mk. I MBT are seen to advantage on a vehicle racing along the coastal highway past Damur towards Beirut. Note 60mm mortar attached to turret, and column of M113 *ZELDAs* following in close-pursuit.
(IDF)

With Beirut just miles out of sight, the crew of an upgraded Centurion MBT take a moment for some badly needed repairs. Photograph offers an excellent view of the Blazer armor application to the Centurion, as well as providing a superb view of the smoke grenade discharger, and method for storing personal equipment. The vehicle's name is *MAHATZ* or "Strike".
(IDF Spokesman)



Typical view of an IDF *ZELDA*, equipped as always, with more personal equipment than the vehicle was designed to carry. Although filled with some of the crew's most prized possessions, the kitbags are placed along the vehicle's sides in a black humor effort to offer some "added" protection against AT rounds.
(BAMACHANE)



IDF medical orderlies in Bhamdoun offer some care and compassion to a wounded civilian who would eventually be heli-lifted to Israel for medical treatment. (IGPO)



GOLANI reconnaissance infantrymen, note NCO carrying captured AK-47, survey a damaged building before continuing their advance. Palestinian snipers, armed with a wide array of weaponry, took an enormous toll of casualties on the advancing IDF forces. (IGPO)

Making sure that the coast is clear of Palestinian or Shi'ite guerrillas carrying SAM-7s or Redeyes, paratroop officers in southern Lebanon prepare an LZ for a CH-53 hovering above. (IDF Spokeman)

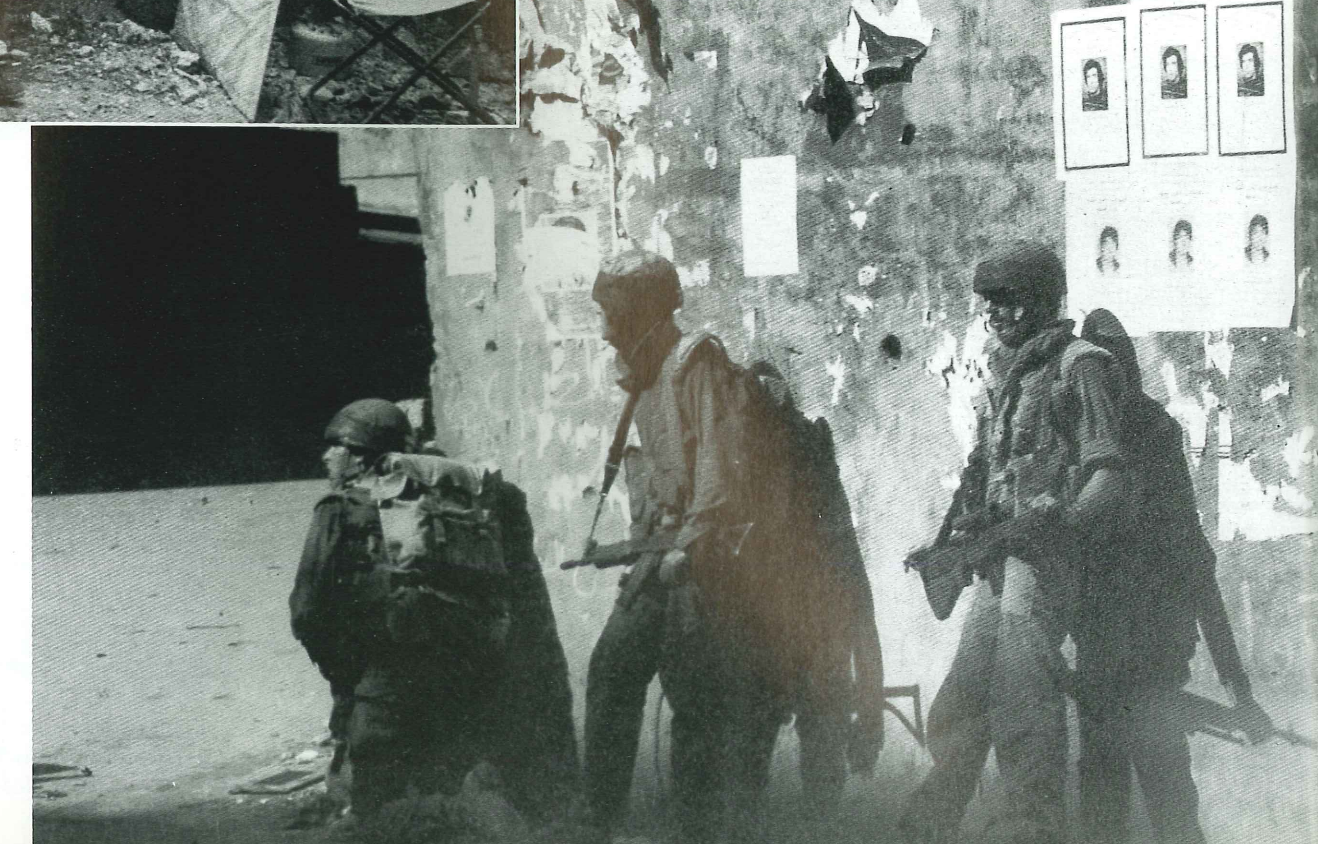
Protecting his ears, and his sanity, a reservist paratrooper prepares to fire yet another 81mm mortar round against a Palestinian sniper position near the Lebanese captial. (IGPO)





Welcome to Beirut! Sightseeing in a very "secure" tourist bus, a *GOLANI* M113 *ZELDA* slowly advances through the Lebanese capital, the first Arab capital to be captured by Israeli forces.
(IDF Spokesman)

Excellent view of an M113 communications vehicle in the eastern (Christian) half of the Lebanese captial.
(BAMACHANE)



Paratroopers, wary of being ambushed in a cross-fire, prepare to undertake one of the more dangerous activities in the Lebanese capital during the 1982 fighting: crossing an intersection. Note paratrooper at point, carrying a large 37 type rucksack, and sniper (right) carrying the M-21.
(IDF)

After the costly fighting, and the bloody massacres, further tragedy in Lebanon. IDF soldiers remove the bodies of Border Guard policemen killed when their headquarters in Tyre was destroyed in an explosion on 13 November, 1982. (IGPO)



A jeep mounted TOW ATGW makes its way through the outskirts of Beirut towards a new home in the Shouf Mountains, during the initial, phased Israeli withdrawal. Photograph offers an excellent view of the Israeli TOW vehicle. (IDF Spokesman)



At a base along the Lebanese coast near Sidon, Chief of Staff Lt. General Moshe Levy, himself an ex-paratroop reconnaissance officer, briefs conscript paratroopers prior to an "offensive patrol". Note rear view of the Israeli manufactured Kevlar flak vest *(SHACHPATS)*, complete with the soldier's personal touches. (IDF Spokesman)



At a check-point near the Awali river, a heavily armed *GOLANI* infantryman wearing a flak vest and winter snow boots *(HERMONIOT)* bruskly examines a Lebanese civilian for explosive. The IDF tried as best possible to allow the Lebanese the maximum access to their families and businesses as possible, but numerous acts of terror, and the smuggling of explosives towards the Israeli frontier demanded this stringent effort. (IGPO)



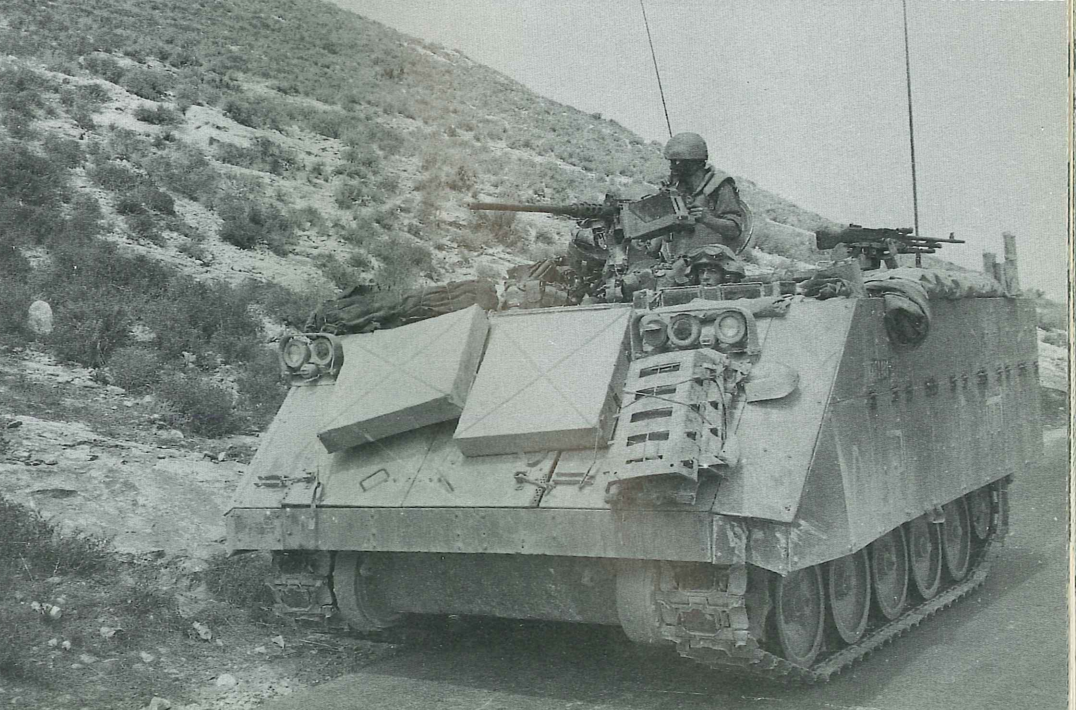
In Lebanon, the IDF encountered all types of weather conditions, from brutal hot summers, to snow filled winters. Here, with two paratroopers providing protection against terrorist attack, a bulldozer clears a path along a mountain road. (IDF Spokesman)

With the exhaustion and relief evident on their faces, combat weary paratroopers return to base following a successful patrol against Shi'ite terrorists in southeastern Lebanon. They wear a combination of *BEGED HOREF* winter suits, rain smocks, and winter parkas, and all carry the *GLILON* SAR. (IDF Spokesman)



Well protected against the cold in their *BEGED HOREF* winter suits, and somewhat protected against enemy fire by their Kevlar flak vests, a paratroop patrol guides its jeep through the snow filled, though treacherous beauty of a Lebanese winter.
(IDF)

A Combat Engineer's sapper version of the M113 *ZELDA* opens a path along a "hotly contested" mountain route; always searching for the invisible Shi'ite guerrillas preparing an ambush in the mountains above.
(IDF Spokesman)



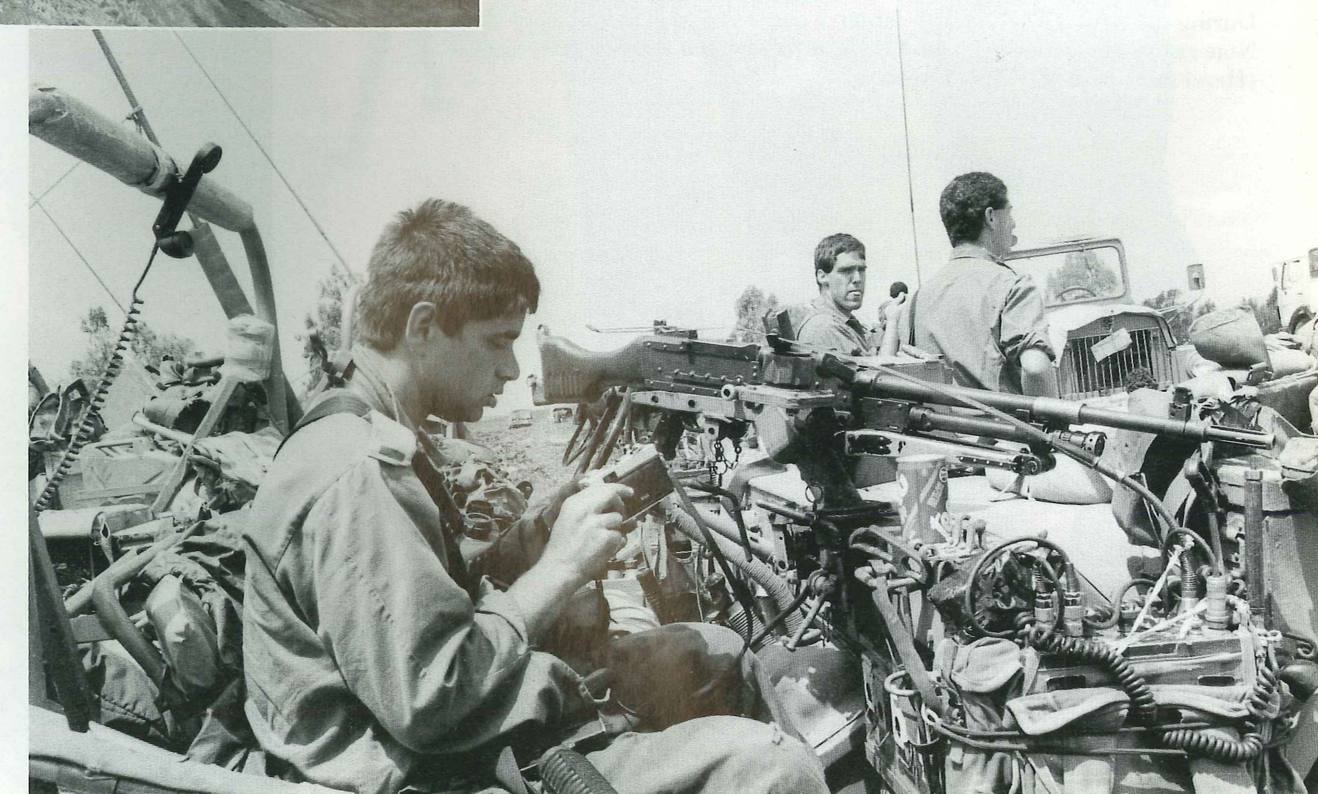
In a south Lebanese village known for its support of the Shi'ite guerrillas, an IDF M113 stands guard, like a sheriff in an American western outpost. Note additional armor applied to vehicle, and crewman standing at the ready besides their machine guns.
(Asher Koralik/IDF Spokesman)



During a phased withdrawal ever closer to home and safety conducted at the ungodly hour of 05:00, an M113 *ZELDA* commander fires his .50 caliber machine gun into the adjacent tree line, hoping to ''deter'' any terrorists laying in ambush.
(Gilad Shekma/BAMACHANE)



Guarding a monument to his brigade similar in meaning to Tel Fahar and Mt. Hermon, a *GOLANI* officer well protected against the climate looks into northern Israel from his vantage point atop Beaufort Castle.
(IDF Spokesman)



Before departing Lebanon for "hopefully" the last time, a *GOLANI* officer sitting in the chaos of his jeep, readies his camera for some sentimental photographs to show the folks back home.
(IDF)



During the withdrawal back to Israel, a convoy of M113s and jeeps show the flag. Note rear vehicle markings for M113, and crewmen wearing flak vests. (Herzl Kunesari/IDF Spokesman)

Even during the final days of the IDF presence, the dangers of life in Lebanon became all too apparent. Combat Engineer sappers remove a ghastly amount of high explosives from a vehicle parked near an Israeli base. (IDF Spokesman)



PLATE A



PLATE B



PLATE C



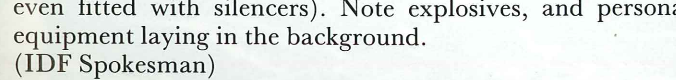
PLATE D

Paratroopers offer ear to ear smiles of relief after completing a counter-insurgency patrol against Shi'ite terrorists in southern Lebanon. Note *MAGist*, and ammunition/spent shell case attached to FN MAG 7.62mm light machine gun, and infantrymen carrying *GLILON* SARs.
(Asher Koralik/IDF Spokeman)



GOLANI infantrymen fire a 60mm mortar against Shi'ite terrorists during a pitched battle at Tir-Harfa. Note camouflage covering applied to Kevlar infantry ballistic helmet, and ear plugs also worn.
(Meir Meizelmen/IDF Spokesman)

Reservist and female soldiers look on in awe as RPG-7 grenades are unloaded at a base in northern Israel, retrieved hours earlier during a paratroop raid against a Shi'ite village in southern Lebanon.
(IDF Spokesman)



The booty from one small Lebanese village: RPG-7s, Heckler and Koch assault rifles, and the ubiquitous AK-47 (some even fitted with silencers). Note explosives, and personal equipment laying in the background.
(IDF Spokesman)



Although most of the members of this patrol look tense, with eyes looking all around and fingers on triggers, one paratrooper manages to wave passionately at the camera. For Israeli forces in Lebanon, no area was secure from ambushes, assassination and kidnapping attempts, and the occasional suicide car bomb. (IDF Spokesman)



Protected by his mini-fortress of sand bags, a *GIVA'ATI* Brigade infantryman gazes into bandit country in southern Lebanon. Note IDF olive bush hat with *TZAHAL* (Hebrew acronym for IDF) nametape. (IDF Spokesman)

After noticing a suspicious glare in the hills above, *GIVA'ATI* infantrymen gingerly race up the steep cliffs, praying to God that what they saw is not an explosive device or a reflection from a weapon. Needless to say, Lebanon is not an easy "tour of duty" for Israeli units. (IDF Spokesman)



Excellent view of the upgraded M113 *ZELDA,* on patrol in the 12 kilometer wide security belt inside southern Lebanon. Note vehicle mounted FN MAG fitted with bi-pod for quick deployment on the ground.
(IDF Spokesman)



Port of Beirut, 26 August, 1982. Three representatives of the Multi-National Force (MNF), a French 3^{e} RPIM paratrooper (left) a U.S. Marine (center), and an Italian Carabinieri military policeman (right), pose for the obligatory handshake.
(IGPO)

And the vigilance continues. On the Israeli side of the Lebanese border, a Border Guard "Joint-Security" Command Car conducts a patrol along the heavily fortified fence.
(Samuel M. Katz)

Two U.S. Marines of the 32nd Marine Amphibious Unit (MAU) man a barricade decorated with poster of Lebanese President Elect, and Lebanese Forces commander Bashir Gemayel. Gemayel's assassination at the hands of the Syrians would initiate the tragic Sabra and Shatilla camp massacres, and a more involved role for the MNF in Lebanese internal affairs. (IMoD)



As bewildered regulars from the reborn Lebanese Army (left) look on, unarmed U.S. Marines wearing BDUs and flak vests coordinate their defensive perimeter with extravagant looking though heavily armed mechanized Bersaglieri soliders from the Italian contingent. The Bersaglieri wear vehicle crew man and Mod. 33 helmets painted white with a plume of dark green rooster feathers. Note the M113 APC also painted in "peace-keeping" white. (IMoD)



U.S. Marines of 32 MAU prepare their fortified, dug-in positions around the heavily shelled tarmac at Beirut International Airport as a MEA (Middle East Airlines) Boeing 747 awaits a take-off during one of the few and far between cease-fires. (U.S. DIVAD)



Weeks before the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, a female Palestinian guerrilla practices her RPG-7 marksmanship skills. She wears the locally produced olive drab fatigue uniform usually worn by full time fighters and officers.
(IDF)

Blue bereted French paratroopers, part of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL), join their Foreign Legion counterparts during the withdrawal of the 14,000 Palestinian combatants from Beirut: August 1982.
(Author's Collection)

A young Palestinian *ashbal* or "lion's cub" mans a mobile .50 caliber machine gun in the refugee camp at El-Ba'as. He wears the PLO's standard lizard pattern camouflage fatigues.
(IDF Spokesman)

"Snap-shot" of a young Palestinian terrorist from the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command (PFLP-GC) in his tunnel at the Ein el-Hilweh camp. He wears a red and white *kefiyeh* draped in traditional "guerrilla" fashion around his head, as well as Syrian vertical lizard pattern camouflage blouse, and Syrian army trousers. He is armed with an AK-47 and PRG-7, as well as rations for a long siege. (IDF Spokesman)



After their capture at the hands of Israeli forces, "RPG-children" or pre-adolescent youths trained to snipe at Israeli armor formations, are taken from the Ansar detention facility to their village near Sidon.
(IGPO)



At the outskirts of the southern Beirut slums, the destroyed remnants of Palestinian anti-aircraft capabilities lay in ruin. On the left, is a BTR-152 with twin 23mm ZSU LAAG anti-aircraft cannons, and a more home-grown AA system, mounted on a civilian halfback trucks. (IDF)



Regular soldiers from the Syrian Palestine Liberation Army (PLA) return to Beirut via the Beirut Damascus Highway. The ZIL truck is adorned with photographs of PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat and Syrian President Hafaz Assad, as well as the four color Palestinian flag. The soldiers wear olive Syrian Army fatigues and Russian battle helmets. (IDF)

Frontal view of an indigenous armored car produced in a PLO workshop in Beirut. The heavy steel plates welded around a truck chassis were never intended to protect the vehicle against determined anti-tank fire, but to allow for some added protection against the very deadly barrages of small arms fire typical of a Lebanese urban fire-fight. (Sigalit Katz)



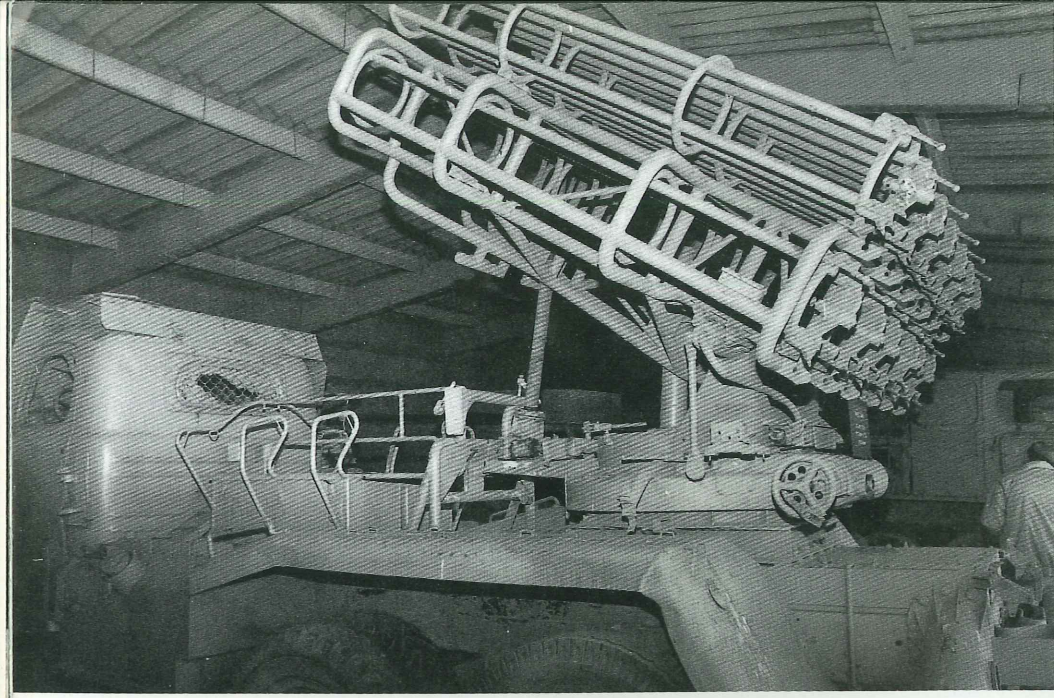


One of the many exhibits on display of captured Palestinian weaponry: an ex-PFLP BTR-40 fitted with a mount for twin 14.5mm machine guns. Palestinian "elite" units were known to have been equipped with BTR-40s armed with SAGGERs and anti-tank recoilless rifles.
(Sigalit Katz)

"Returning an old debt", captured palestinian BM-11 Katyusha launchers pressed into Artillery Corps service pound Beirut. *(BAMACHANE)*



One of the more effective anti-fortification weapons used by the various Palestinian guerrilla groups in Lebanon: the Soviet B-11 107mm recoilless gun. With an effective anti-tank range of 450 meters, the B-11 was a cheap, and accurate defensive weapon against "enemy armor", be they Israeli or Syrian. The Palestinians however were adapt to use the B-11 in an offensive role, using HE rounds, and aimed point blank at enemy positions with devastating effect.
(Sigalit Katz)



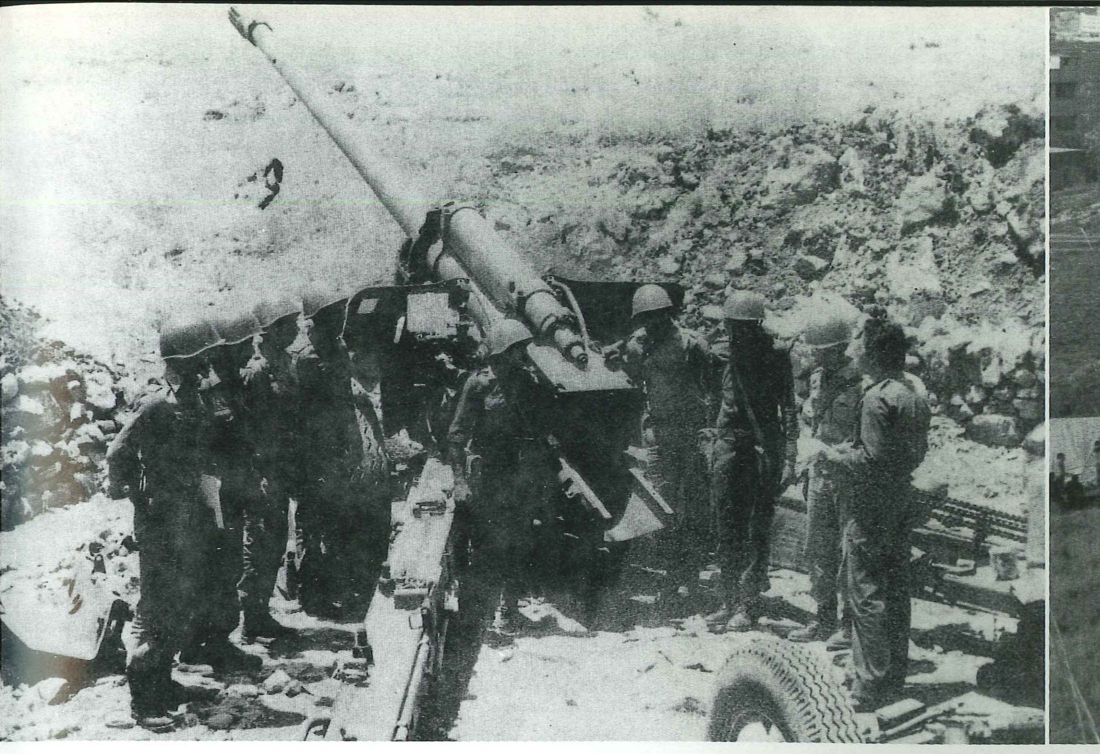


Close-up view of an ex-PLO BM-24 launcher for 12 240mm rockets mounted in the Z1L-151/157 truck.
(Sigalit Katz)

An Israeli captured BTR-152 in the color scheme of a Palestinian faction stationed in eastern Lebanon. (Sigalit Katz)



Syrian infantrymen stationed in southeastern Lebanon assemble at their barracks in Lebanon's Shouf Mountains, April 1981. The soldiers wear tan double-button fatigue shirt and tan trousers, and black combat boots. Lebanon was a particularly difficult tour of duty for Syrian soldiers, who like any foreign force in the Levant, faced a host of adversaries in combat; from the Palestinians, to the Christians and all smaller factions in between.
(Author's Collection)



Prior to commencing a shelling attack against Christian Lebanese Forces positions in Zahle, a Syrian M-46 130mm field gun crew listens to instructions from the battery commander.
(Author's Collection)



Excellent view of a Syrian T-54 seen at an active rear support base near Ein Zehalta, 8 June 1982 fighting. The white aerial recognition markings were particular to Syrian forces in Lebanon.
(Lebanese Research and Information Center)

A Syrian T-62 from the 3rd Armored Division shells the Lebanese city of Zahle, in March 1981. (Lebanese Research and Information Center)





Blurry, thought rare photograph of a Syrian ZSU-23-4 quad 23mm anti-aircraft crew in eastern Lebanon undergoing a lecture by the division's political officer. The Syrians first introduced the ZSU-23-4 into Lebanon during the 1975-76 Civil War, where it was used as a squad support weapon for rooting out Palestinian snipers.
(Author's Collection)

Abandoned and destroyed, a Syrian T-62 sits ready for the ride back to Israel.
(IDF Spokesman)



Although the destruction of the IDF-Syrian tank battle at Sultan Yackoub proved devastating to both sides, the hard fought battle served as a rite of passage for the Syrian armor formations who fought tenaciously, and with impressive skill. (IDF Spokesman)



A target destroyed by the marksmanship of Syrian tank gunners: the ghastly remains of an Israeli M-60. (IDF Spokesman)



The charred remnants of a Syrian T-62 serves as a dramatic reminder to what a deadly endeavor tank vs. tank combat can be, especially to the two IDF M-60s who destroyed the Syrian tank moments before.
(IDF Spokesman)



23 August, 1982. Under the auspices of a very precarious cease-fire, the Syrians retreat from Beirut. IDF Brigadier Generals Menachem Einan (left) and Amos Yaron nervously observe a heavily camouflaged BTR-60 belonging to the Syrian 85th Brigade
(IDF Spokesman)

The destructive effects of a well-placed 105mm round is clearly evident on the twisted, capsized turret of a Syrian T-62 MBT near Beirut. (IDF Spokesman)



A Syrian T-54 from the 85th Armored Brigade leads elements of the Syrian PLA during the withdrawal from Beirut along the Beirut-Damascus Highway. Of interesting note are the Syrian vehicle markings seen here to advantage. (Author's Collection)



A Russian made jeep belonging to the Syrian 85th Brigade, and adorned with a larger than life portrait of President Assad makes its final drive out of Beirut during the August 1982 withdrawal. (IDF Spokesman)



Excellent view of the Mercedes vehicles ferrying Syrian PLA units out of Beirut. As part of the "regular" Syrian military, the PLA soldiers wear dark olive fatigues together with ChiCom pouches and Soviet steel helmets. (IDF Spokesman)

Close-up view of a Syrian BMP-1 infantry combat vehicle, captured by the IDF. Note turret with its 73mm gun and SAGGER missile launcher seen here to advantage. (Sigalit Katz)



A Syrian PT-76, damaged and captured by Israeli forces in the Beka'a Valley. The camouflage scheme, although in typical Syrian colors, is unique for amphibious vehicles posted to Lebanon.
(Sigalit Katz)



Although the Syrians were not successful on the batlefield against the IDF onslaught of 1982, they have since proven themselves masters of Lebanon's internal politics, by manipulating the actions of each factional militia for their own advantage. One of the Syrian's greatest coups was its military control of the various Shi'ite armies in proxy combat against the MNF, the Israelis, and even the Palestinians. Here, Shi'ite *Amal* militiamen operating a commandeered, newly camouflaged ex-Lebanese Army M113 engage Palestinian positions in Beirut.
(IDF Spokesman)

One of the more fanatic Syrian controlled terrorist groups in Lebanon is the Syrian Socialist Nationalist Party (SSNP). The SSNP's "greatest" victory was its assassination of Lebanon's President elect Bashir Gemayel in 1982, although their violent methods have only increased in the following years. Pictured here, a suicide truck bomber photographed just prior to his kamikaze attack against an Israeli position. He wears the Syrian version of the Pakistani camouflage fatigue uniform, red beret, and SSNP badge. (SSNP)

Lebanese Forces "Commander in Chief" during the 1975-76 Civil War and the 1982 Israeli invasion, Bashir Gemayel. A crafty and ruthless leader known to "hat and bowl" with all sides, Bashir succeeded (with massive infusions of Israeli aid) in raising the military proficiency of the Lebanese Forces from a ragtag militia to a fairly disciplined fighting force. His olive Israeli uniform is typical of the Lebanese Forces, complete with LF *Kata'eb* (literally "of the book", but the name of the Christian Phalange Party) patch, and LF nametape. (Al-Masira)



Lebanese Forces military ceremony in the mountains just north of Beirut, spring 1982 with Bashir Gemayel the obvious guest of honor. Note many LF "commandos" wearing civilian produced "duck hunter" camouflage uniforms. (Al-Masira)

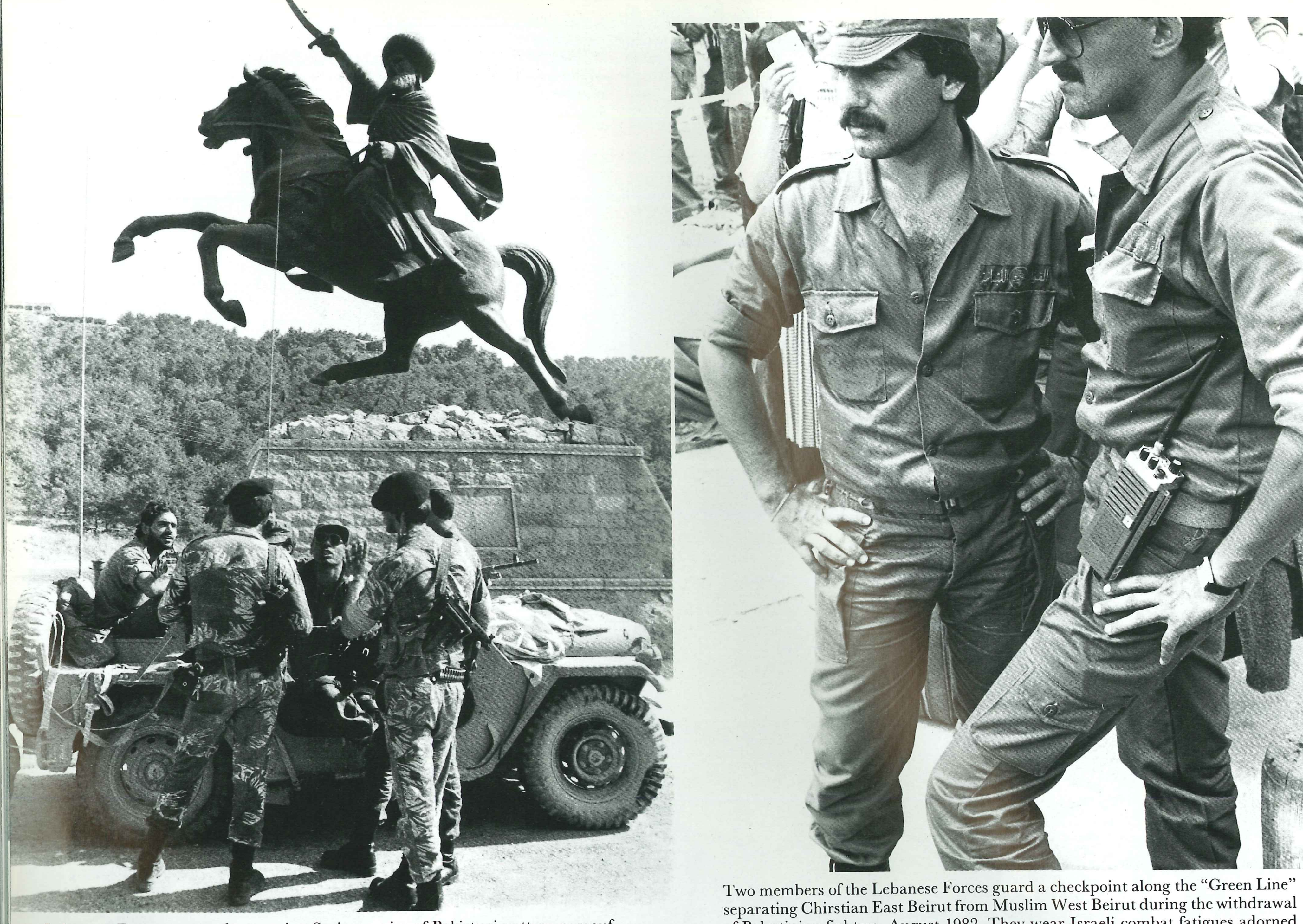


In southern Lebanon, Christian militia commander Major Sa'ad Haddad confers with a subordinate officer, while crewmen in an Israeli supplied M113 look on.
(IGPO)

8 June, 1982. As his Israeli equipped bodyguards look on, renegade Lebanese Major Sa'ad Haddad helps raise the Lebanese flag over Beaufort castle, captured in a costly *SAYERET GOLANI* attack. The crusader castle had for years been a symbol of Palestinian dominance of the area! (IGPO)

IDF Chief of Staff Lt. General Rafael 'Raful' Eitan (left) greets his Lebanese Forces counter-part Fadi Frem, on the outskirts of Beirut. Smiling at left is Bashir Gemayel, Lebanese Forces warlord.





Lebanese Forces commados wearing Syrian copies of Pakistani pattern camouflage fatigues and carrying Swiss SIG 540 assault rifles confer with an IDF patrol in Beirut, August 1982. (IGPO)

Two members of the Lebanese Forces guard a checkpoint along the "Green Line" separating Chirstian East Beirut from Muslim West Beirut during the withdrawal of Palestinian fighters, August 1982. They wear Israeli combat fatigues adorned with LF nametapes, seen here to advantage.
(DAVA)

Lebanese Forces ''commandos'' mount an ''offensive patrol'' in the hills east of Beirut in the week following the assassination of their leader, Bashir Gemayel. Note AK ammunition carried in IDF load bearing equipment. (IMoD)



Although their promised, and much vaunted military prowess was not used at all during the June 1982 Israeli invasion, Lebanese Forces did engage in fierce fighting against Druze, Sunni and Shi'ite Muslim throughout Beirut and its surrounding mountain range. In a respite from the urban fighting near the "Green Line", a rather intimidating group of LF troopers pose for the cameras. (A1-Masira)



A mechanized force of Lebanese Forces M113s prepares to attack Druze positions in the Shouf Mountains following in response to a Druze Attack near Beirut. (Al-Masira)

Wearing Israeli combat fatigues, and armed with a Soviet AK-47 7.62mm assault rifle, a LF female trooper gets in some close-quarter target practice, August 1985. The beautiful, and often refined LF females often shocked observers by their brutality in combat, including the collection of enemy fingers worn in expensive designer leather bags!
(Al-Masira)

With the bitter cold mountain winds making duty a most difficult task, a Lebanese Forces troopers stands guard against any of the Christians numerous enemies in the Levant; be they Syrians, Shi'ites, Druze, or Palestinians. Of interesting note is this trooper's equipment, consisting of an Israeli army winter parka, Syrian lizard pattern camouflage fatigues, and an M-16 5.56mm assault rifle.
(Author's Collection)







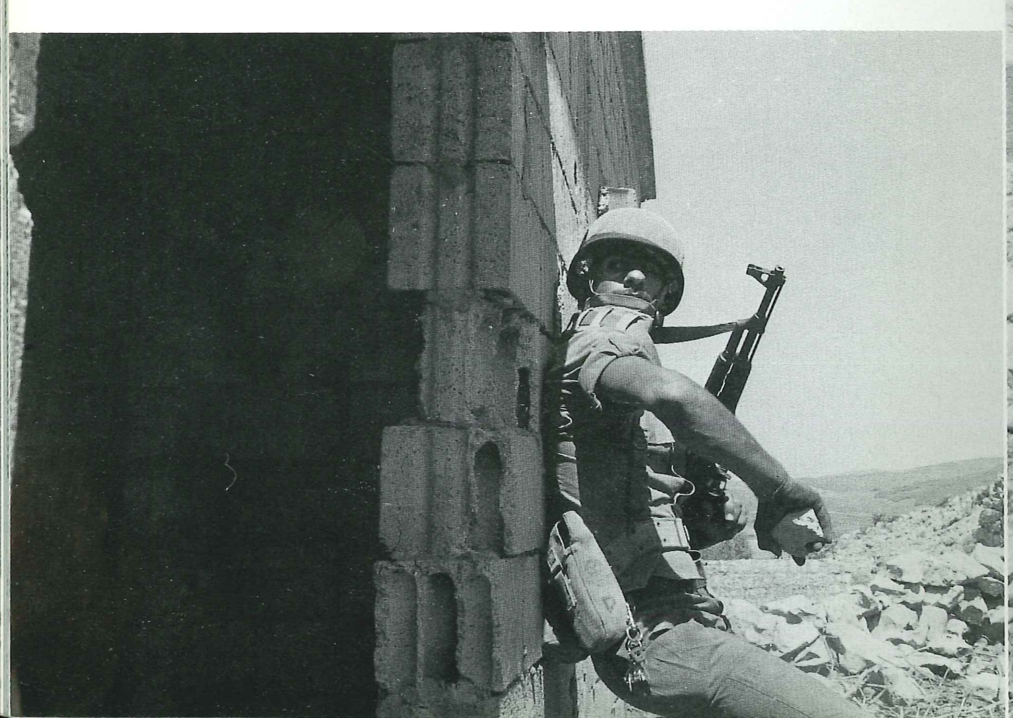
Lebanese Forces commandos at a swearing in ceremony, 1987. They all wear ex-Lebanese Army U.S. BDU camouflage fatigues, French style berets, and M-16s.
(Al-Masira)



Soldiers from the pro-Israeli South Lebanese Army (SLA) conduct battle-maneuvers near Marjayoun, April 1988. The SLA, the name given to the joint-Christian and Shi'ite militia the late Major Haddad founded, acts as a buffer between the Israeli frontier and Palestinians, and Shi'ite attempts to cross it. Although they are trained and equipped by the Israelis, their combat showing has been less than impressive.
(IDF Spokesman)

Portrait of an SLA trooper. His appearance is entirely Israeli, from ex-U.S. M-1 helmet to olive fatigues, to web gear. He carries the Soviet AK-47; a very popular piece of hardware in Lebanon.
(IDF Spokesman)

Their very limited economic resources quite evident, a SLA trooper substitutes a rock for a grenade during "urban combat training". Of interesting note is the IDF khaki canvas ammo pouch.
(IDF Spokesman)



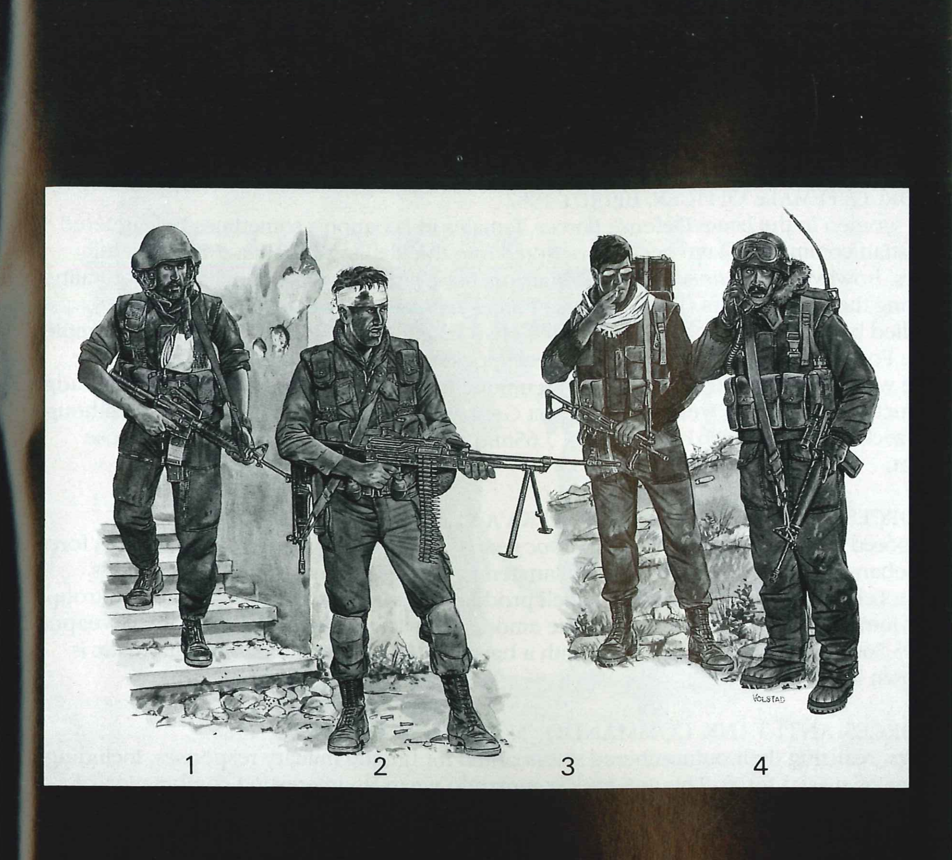


PLATE A

1. IDF TANK COMMANDER, TYRE, JUNE 1982
This IDF Armored Corps tank officer (who has left the secured safety of his *MERKAVA* MBT to root out a PLO sniper in the rubble of Tyre) wears the standard Israeli tank kit, including olive Nomex coveralls, Kevlar *SHACHPATS* [or "flak vest"], Type 602 tank crewman ballistic helmet, and black leather combat boots. He also wears the "modern era" IDF load bearing equipment, which holds numerous 30 round magazines for his CAR-15 5.56mm assault rifle: the favorite weapon of IDF NCOs and officers. Note field map tucked securely into web gear.

2. RECON PARATROOPER 2ND LIEUTENANT, EIN EL-HILWEH REFUGEE CAMP, JUNE 1982
This slightly wounded paratroop officer from *SAYERET TZANHANIM* (the conscript paratroop brigade's reconnaissance battalion) reflects the bitter battle fought between a vanguard force of recon paratroopers and the Ein el-Hilweh refugee camp's fanatic Palestinian defenders. He wears the standard issue olive fatigue blouse and three pockets trousers, U.S. Mk.1952 flak vest, and standard load bearing equipment (note Mk.26 fragmentation grenades worn on utility belt). His brown leather jump boots are the only "field" article of equipment which identifies this solider as a *TZANHAN* [or "paratrooper"]. He has slung his *GLILON* 5.56mm SAR over his shoulder, opting to utilize the services of a captured Soviet made PK GPMG 7.62mm light machine gun, with a 50 round ammo belt. Note Khaki canvas knee-pads worn, and khaki canvas pistol holder for Beretta M1951S 9mm automatic.

3. GIVA'ATI BRIGADE INFANTRYMAN, SECURITY ZONE 1988
Talking one last drag on a cigarette, a conscript infantryman from the *GIVA'ATI* Infantry Brigade prepares to set out on patrol in the security zone near the Israeli border. He wears American OG-107 trousers (a favorite among infantry, and elite unit soldiers), as well as a special Kevlar flak vest equipped with ammunition pouches. He also wears a captured, ex-PLO "wooly pully" sweater, as well as a white *kefiyeh* Arab headdress, worn here as a scarf. He is armed with the *GLILON SAR* fitted with a forward pistol grip, and also carries a rucksack's load of U.S. made LAW 66mm anti-tank rockets.

4. ARMORED CORPS RESERVIST, SO. LEBANON 1985
Carrying an AN/PRC-25 field radio, this reservist radioman cautiously glances the southern Lebanese hills in search of Shi'ite Muslim terrorists. To protect against the harsh Lebanese winters, the IDF issued its personnel with the special one piece *BEGED HOREF* [or "winter suit"], complete with lined hood, as well as the *HERMONIOT* insulated winter boots. This aging warrior also wears a Kevlar infantry ballistic helmet, complete with lizard pattern camouflage pattern cover, black rubber tubing, and protective goggles. The interesting load bearing equipment is called *EPHOD HA'SHAN* [or "Armored Corps Web Gear"] consists of rectangular chest pouches designed specifically for the "sitting" tank soldiers, complete with rectangular canteens worn on either side. He is armed with the M-16 5.56mm assault rifle, a standard weapon issued to reservists and second line troops, although this weapon is equipped with a telescopic sight.

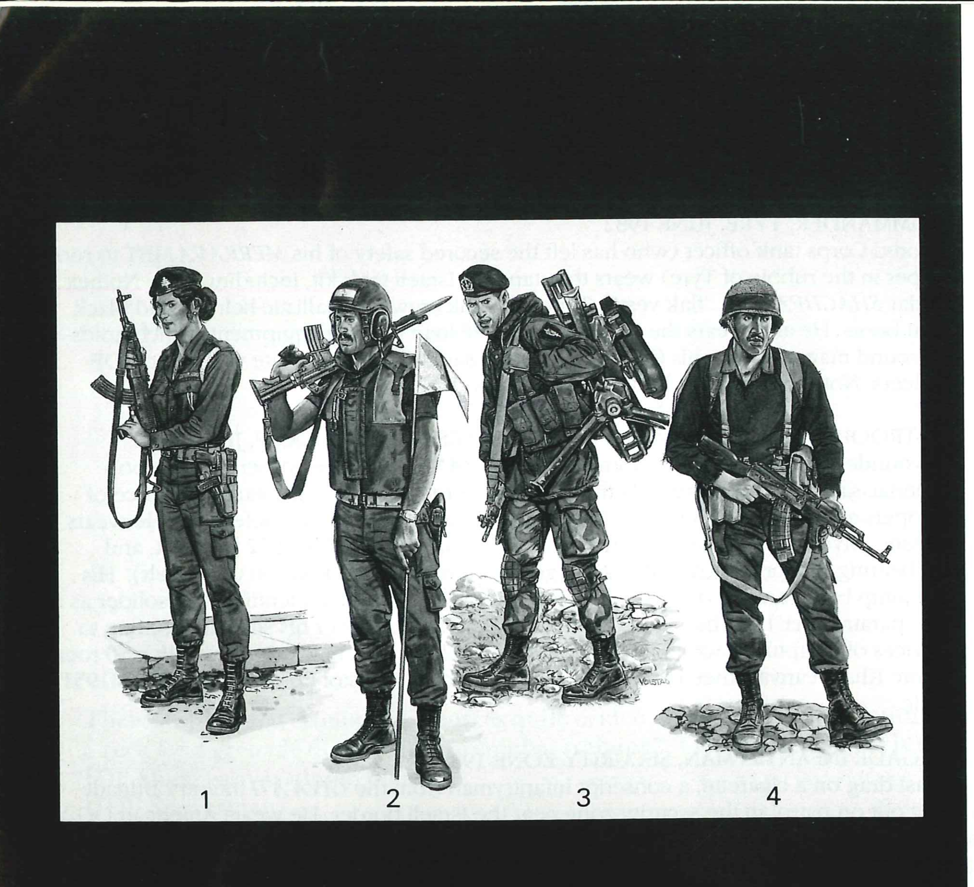


PLATE B

1. LEBANESE FORCES FEMALE OFFICER, BEIRUT 1982
Much like the women in the Israel Defense Forces, females in Lebanon's sometimes beleaguered Maronite Christian community have been conscripted into the Phalangist militia. Unlike Israeli female soldiers, however, the Christian female warriors have often shown a penchant for brutality rare even among the male solders. This Lebanese Forces *femme fatal* wears an Israeli fatigue uniform supplied by the Israelis (note three pocket olive fatigue trousers, and olive blouse complete with Lebanese Forces nametape above the left breast pocket) tapered to adhere to her feminine physique. The white lanyard and black beret with unique though non-issue Lebanese Forces badge indicates instructor's status. Her weapon is the East German MPiKMS 7.62mm assault rifle, although she keeps a Czechoslovakian Vz.61 SKORPION 7.65mm machine pistol close at hand for close quarter combat.

2. LEBANESE FORCES M113 APC COMMANDER, BEKA'A VALLEY 1985
This M113 armored personnel carrier wears *ad hoc* gear, typical among many of the Christian forces operating in Lebanon. His black T-shirt is a civilian item, and the crewman's ballistic helmet is adorned with a Lebanese flag. He wears an Israeli produced Kevlar flak vest, and Israeli paratrooper brown leather jump boots (which were a favorite among Christian soldiers). His personnal weapon is the CAR-15 5.56mm assault rifle, equipped with a bayonet, and a Browning 9mm automatic is worn on a brown leather holster.

3. LEBANESE FORCES ANTI-TANK COMMANDO, NORTHERN LEBANON, 1986
The Phalangists, realizing their outnumbered status called for unique military responses, including the deployment of special forces. This anti-tank commando wears an interesting combination of Israeli, indigenous, and Italian gear, including: a Lebanese French style beret with Lebanese Forces anti-tank commando beret badge, civilian navy blue turtle neck sweater, Israeli *DUBON* [or "winter parka"] adorned with the anti-tank commando patch worn on the left shoulder, Israeli web gear, and Italian camouflage pattern fatigue trousers. He is armed with the Swiss SG543 5.56mm assault rifle, and the highly deadly MILAN ATGW. Note Nomex crewman gloves, and Israeli jump boots.

4. SOUTH LEBANON ARMY (SLA) MILITIAMAN, SOUTH LEBANON, 1989
The South Lebanon Army [or "SLA"] is the current Christian/Shi'ite militia which was originally founded by the late renegade Lebanese Major Sa'ad Haddad. A small force with approximately 2000 soldiers, the SLA patrols a small strip near the Lebanese-Israeli fronter primarily against Palestinian, and radical Shi'ite Muslim elements. They are equipped *entirely* by Israel. This SLA trooper has an Israeli appearance, with IDF issue olive fatigues, black combat boots, and olive drab sweater. His helmet is an American M-1 complete with tan netting and black rubber tubing. Ammunition for his Rumanian AKM 7.62mm assault rifle is carried in the Israeli "old style" khaki canvas web gear system, in special AK-47 banana clip pouches produced by Israel after the 1967 War which was to accommodate the thousands of AK-47s captured from Egypt and Syria.

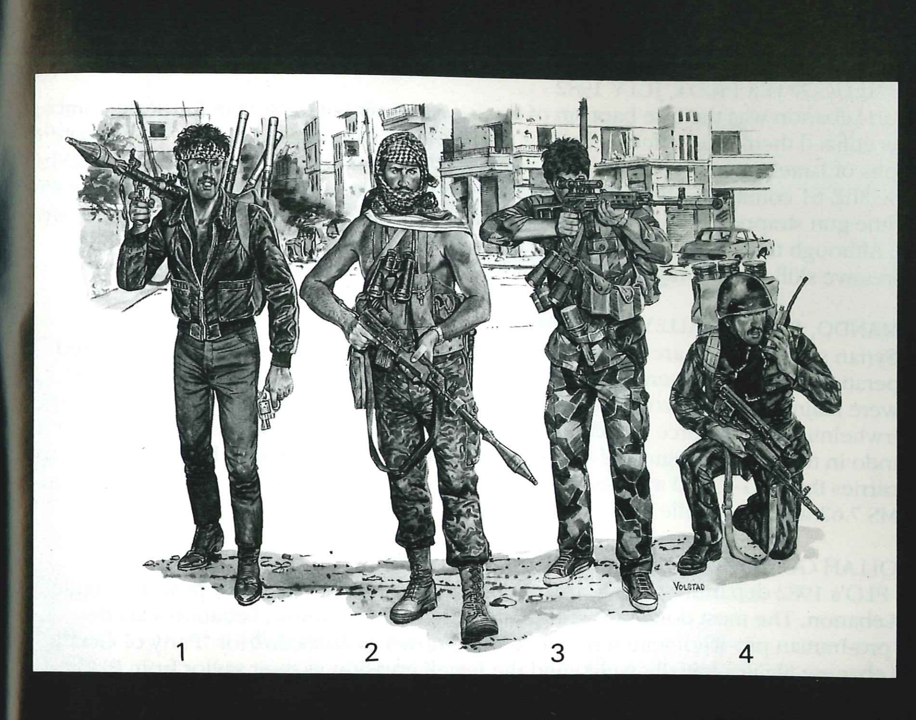


PLATE C

1. PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA (EL-FATAH), TYRE, JUNE 1982
Following Israel's 6 June 1982 invasion of Lebanon, the vast majority of uniformed, and "regular" Palestinian fighters attached to conventional brigades shed their lizard pattern camouflage fatigues for civilian garb – hoping to blend into the chaos of the civilian population. Unfortunately for Israeli forces, however, they rarely put down their arms. This *el-Fatah* guerrilla embarking on a night-time anti-tank ambush wears the favourite civilian "uniform" of southern Lebanon: tight fitting blue jeans, and a leather jacket. Completing the uniform is the RPG-7 anti-tank weapon, and a snub nose .357 Magnum revolver.

2. PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA (ALF), BEIRUT, JULY 1982
Since the small, and obscure ALF [or "Arab Liberation Front"] is Iraqi sponsored and controlled, this fighter wears an obsolete camouflage pattern once used by the Iraqi military. He carries a Hungarian model of the AK series of 7.62mm assault rifles, fitted with a scope, and anti-tank rifle grenade. Ammunition is worn on the locally produced Chicom pouch (many times adorned with Palestinian flags and emblems of the various Palestinian groups). A K-BAR commando knife is worn on the utility belt for "close quarter killing. Note red checkered *kefiyeh* headdress worn, and olive canvas Palestinian *patauga* boots.

3. PALESTINIAN GUERRILLA (EL-FATAH: ABU MUSSA FACTION). TRIPOLI, 1983
When the IDF forced the PLO to evacuate its over 14,000 fighters from Beirut in August 1982, a severe, and bloody rift developed among the Palestinian ranks. The most serious threat to PLO Chairman Yasir Arafat's control of the "armed struggle" was Colonel Abu Mussa, who led a bloody revolt against Arafat-loyalist forces in 1983. This sniper (armed with a Soviet Drugenov 7.62mm sniper rifle ominously fitted with a silencer) wears two distinct patterns of camouflage clothing indigenous to Palestinian workshops in Lebanon. Ammunition is carried in a tan canvas bandolier, and a Soviet RPG-43 anti-tank grenade is worn tucked inside the fighter's waist belt. In addition, four Czechoslovakian RG-4 anti-personnel grenades are worn slung around the shoulder on a cloth strap. Note TOKAROV pistol worn on holster.

4. PALESTINIAN "COMMANDO" (PFLP-GC), DAMUR, 1988
This fighter in Ahmed Jibril's Syrian-backed Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine General Command (PFLP-GC) is seen here fighting off a *SAYERET GOLANI* assault on the group's Lebanon headquarters in December 1988. He wears a Syrian vertical pattern lizard pattern camouflage fatigues with a U.S. BDU pattern field jacket, converted into a utility vest by cutting off the sleeves. Several U.S. made LAW 66mm anti-tank rockets are carried in a tan khaki canvas rucksack, and the weapon carried is the Soviet AK-74 5.45mm assault rifle fitted with a telescopic sight. Of interesting note is the Soviet battle helmet crudely painted with spots of brown and the word *Falastin* [or "Palestine"] in red, and the red *kefiyeh* worn as a scarf.



PLATE D

1. SYRIAN MI-24 HELICOPTER PILOT, JULY 1982
The 1982 War in Lebanon was the true baptism of fire for anti-tank helicopters in full scale combat, and the Syrians utilized them most effectively. This Mi-24 pilot – carrying a clipboard with identification photographs of Israeli armor – wears a Soviet light weather tan flight suit, and the Soviet ZSh-3 helmet over the ShZ-61 communications helmet. Of interesting note is the Czechoslovakian Vz.25 9mm submachine gun strapped to his hip on a khaki canvas holster, and the commando knife worn on the left leg. Although this pilot is holding his traditional worry beads, Syrian helicopter pilots displayed impressive skill and courage in their attacks against Israeli armor and infantry forces.

2. SYRIAN COMMANDO, BEKA'A VALLEY, JULY 1982
Although the Syrian special forces are great admirers of camouflage uniforms, their much feared "elite units" operating in Lebanon were known to wear civilian clothing, and athletic track suits. These outfits were mainly worn for comfort, and for the ability to blend into the civilian landscape should an overwhelming Israeli force "suddenly" appear. This commando, wears typical fare for a Syrian commando in the tank battleground of the Beka'a Valley, including navy blue track suit, and sneakers. He carries the RPG-7, and a rucksack loaded with PG-7 grenades. His personal weapon is the Soviet AKMS 7.62mm assault rifle.

3. SHI'ITE HIZBOLLAH GUNMAN, BEIRUT, 1987
Following the PLO's 1982 departure from Beirut, an intense, and bloody political power struggle developed in Lebanon. The most dominant group emerging was, of course, Lebanon's Shi'ites, especially the pro-Iranian pro-Khomeini terrorist faction known as *Hizbollah* [or "Party of God"]. Although the Lebanese Shi'ites initially welcomed the Israeli invasion as their savior from PLO oppression, the Shi'ites soon declared a *jihad* [or "holy war'] against Israel, the West, and numerous other factions in Lebanon, including the Palestinians, and Christians. This *Hizbollah* gunman wears U.S. Army BDU pattern camouflage trousers, and a BDU pattern PASGT flak vest (probably stolen from Lebanese Army stocks) over a Syrian Army brown M-65 field Jacket. He wears Lebanese Army khaki canvas chest pouches (with a photography of *Imam* Khomeini taped to one of the pouches), and carries a Beretta Model 12 9mm submachine gun. Also carried – for use against Israeli or American aircraft – is the SAM-7, and a Colt. 45 automatic is worn on a U.S. Marine holster. This fighter wears a white knitted *haj* cap indicating that he has made the pilgrimage to Mecca, and a green (the color of Islam) head band.

4. SYRIAN COMMANDO, BEIRUT 1987
The Syrians despatched several hundred commandos into Beirut in 1987 to separate the warring Shi'ite and Palestinian factions battling to the death around the refugee camps in the West Beirut slums. This commando wears the "old" pattern lizard pattern camouflage fatigue blouse and trousers, as well as an olive drab Soviet battle helmet covered with loose fitting netting. To offer some meager, though much welcomed protection agains incoming projectiles, and shrapnel, this commando wears the newly issued olive Soviet body armor vest under his Chicom chest ammunition pouches. The weapon carried is the Soviet AK-74 5.45mm assault rifle fitted with a BG-15 grenade launcher. Note U.S. AN/PRC-25 field radio worn on back pack.



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